

# PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY

## Get Vaccinated



**It is important to get a flu shot every year – but this year the need is critical.**

Seasonal influenza and COVID-19 both attack the respiratory system, and having one can make you more vulnerable to the other. Flu can lead to serious illness, hospitalization, or even death. Getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and your family from getting the flu.

### Why is a flu shot more important than ever this year?

- Flu vaccination prevents illness, medical visits, and hospitalizations at a time when hospitals and healthcare workers are already overwhelmed with COVID-19.
- A flu shot can stop you from spreading the flu to older people or individuals with chronic health conditions, who may be especially vulnerable to both flu and COVID-19.
- Vaccinating pregnant women against the flu can help protect mom and baby from flu infection for several months after the baby is born.

### Why is NOW the best time to get vaccinated?

- Flu season begins in early October, so **now** is the perfect time to get vaccinated. Flu vaccine can take up to two weeks to provide protection against the flu.
- You and your family should get vaccinated against seasonal flu before the influenza virus begins to spread throughout the community.
- When more people in a community get vaccinated against the flu, more people are protected—especially those who are most vulnerable like babies, older people and people with chronic health conditions.

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Ask your health care provider for a shot, or find a free public flu clinic at [marylandvax.org](https://marylandvax.org)

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For more information about seasonal flu, visit [health.maryland.gov/flu](https://health.maryland.gov/flu)

